

Community of a Continent

Case Study: Africa
An Appeal to MAPS



[Unit Summary]

- In this project, students assume the role of regional geographers traveling an assigned area of Africa. As a member of a fact-finding investigative team, they will collect and present data and pertinent information to support their proposal that geographical features affect the living standards and quality of life throughout Africa.

The students will present their findings to a non-profit organization, Making A Perfect Society (MAPS). Their findings and recommendations will be used by MAPS to help determine the need for cultural improvements for that region.

[Unit Summary continued]

- Student representatives are appointed to fact-finding committees to research the historical development as well as current issues that contribute to Africa's poverty levels. They are to develop a proposal for addressing the problem, using supportive multimedia



[Curriculum Framing Questions]

- **Essential Question**

Why is geography important?

- **Unit Questions**

How does **where** people live impact **how** they live?

What are the key obstacles affecting the development of Africa?

What suggestions can be offered to improve the future of life in Africa?

[Unit Summary Continued]

Content Questions

What physical characteristics describe your region?

How does the demographics of your region influence the standard of living?

What physical and cultural resources influence the development of the region?

Which past or current issues in your region affect the global economy?

[Community of a Continent]

This project will help my students develop 21st Century skills by:

- Collaborating with peers
- Analyzing data and offering solutions for Africa's problems with poverty
- Communicating through blogs, virtual postcards
- Self-directed learning through research
- Critical thinking – offering solutions for relief of Africa's pressing issues
- Creativity – postcards, photostory

Gauging Student Needs Assessment

Purpose of the Assessment

To gauge what students already know about the continent of Africa and the problems faced by the people living there.

What I want to learn from my students

Do students have an understanding of obstacles faced throughout Africa and how they impact the quality of life. To see what misconceptions students may have about Africa.

How I have tried to promote higher- order thinking?

The questions target issues that students will research. They will use higher-order thinking and 21st century skills to analyze and develop solutions for these issues.

Gauging Student Needs

Assessment continued

How the assessment information helps me and my students plan for upcoming activities in the unit?

Teacher:

Helps to determine topics of study

Helps with placement of student work groups

Students:

Basis of inquiry and interest

[Goals for the Unit]

- Develop student understanding of current African culture
- Understanding the local obstacles of life in Africa and how these obstacles translate to the world community
- Expand and refine the technology skills of the students
- Develop student's higher level of thinking skills as they look for solutions and make recommendations
- Cultivate in students a need for global awareness and involvement

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Africa - Change in a Community

North Africa (Health Official)

May 25, 2009

Dear Mom and Dad,

I am writing to tell you what I have learned since my arrival in North Africa several days ago.

Did you know that just five years ago North Africa had an extremely bad locust outbreak which caused an estimated \$2.5 billion in harvest loss. Use of better pest control measures combined with a cold, dry breeding season has allowed the local agencies to regain control.

Also, I have to drink water from special bottles because the water supply here is very contaminated and is a leading cause of many diseases. Even preventable diseases, such as the Measles, are difficult to control due to the high cost for vaccines. They told me that just one vaccine can cost a weeks salary, so most people cannot afford to vaccinate. The major health problems here, combined with limited medical facilities, such as hospitals and clinics, and declining doctor population constantly contributes to the deterioration of the African population in the North.

I will write more as soon as we get to our next stop. I love and miss you both!

Your son,

Andrew



Week 1 -Week 4

